

Group skeptical of Kin-Buc plans

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EDISON — Approximately 125 persons attending a Citizens' Committee to Close Kin-Buc meeting last night were not ready to accept the idea that expansion of the Meadow Road landfill would prove environmentally sound.

"Why should we believe you now?" asked one woman of a spokesman from Scientific, Inc., Kin-Buc's parent firm, who told the audience that Kin-Buc II and III, if approved, would be a safe and workable solution to the solid waste disposal problem.

Mrs. Jerry Lee Chafin admitted that Kin-Buc had been "sorely lacking" in open communication with the public and attempted to relate the company's stand on the controversial subject.

Retained by Scientific six weeks ago, Mrs. Chafin told those gathered at the Grace Reformed Church that Kin-Buc's expansion plans, conditionally approved by the state Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) in late July, call for a chemical treatment plant similar to that described at the meeting by a representative from Rollins Environmental Services Inc.

Rollins, located in Bridgeport, has been attempting to attract Kin-Buc's industrial customers since DEP closed the Meadow Road landfill to the dumping of chemical wastes in July.

Angered by Kin-Buc's operations to date, most of those present appeared reluctant to accept Mrs. Chafin's suggestion

that Marvin Mahan, Scientific's chairman of the board, present the company's position at a future meeting.

One man put the blame on Kin-Buc for his not being able "to go out to the backyard, sit in a lounge chair and breathe God's air." Why, he queried, should Kin-Buc be allowed to accept more chemical wastes while he, himself, doesn't have the right "to go out and burn a few leaves in my backyard?"

Edison Councilman John Hogan received applause when he suggested Mrs. Chafin's attempts were "too little, too late on the part of Kin-Buc." He suggested she relate to her employers the committee's message which he interpreted as being their refusal to make any accommodations with the firm.

Councilwoman Dorothy Drwal, however, who serves as chairperson for the committee, said later in the session that Mahan would be invited to speak at a future meeting.

Mrs. Chafin said that chemical wastes Kin-Buc received, while it was the only sanitary landfill DEP recommended as acceptable for such disposal, "came in at far too great a rate."

She contended, however, that Kin-Buc should not be blamed for operating a landfill business in an area which, until recently, the state advocated for such an operation.

Edward Asheby, plant manager of Rollins, outlined what he termed a "viable alternative" to Kin-Buc's operation. He described his company's procedure of

handling chemical wastes which include thermal oxidation or incineration, chemical processing and biological degradation.

Currently utilizing 47 acres in an "isolated" area of the state surrounded predominantly by farmland, Asheby related how each of the truckloads of chemicals brought to Rollins are sampled and analyzed to determine what kind of treatment is required.

Located near Racoon Creek and the Delaware River, he said that his firm is routinely monitored by the Delaware Regional Valley Commission. He said that abatement wells underground check for leakages and that impermeable cells protect against ground leeching by incinerator ashes and sludges. The firm also monitors for routine hydrocarbon exhaust, he said.

Rollins doesn't accept all chemicals, Asheby said, noting his facility doesn't have the capability of handling radioactive materials.

The company's processing costs, he explained, depends on the types of chemicals and amount of alkaline material needed to neutralize substances.

He said his operation's normal rates are competitive with those of Kin-Buc but noted the local firm underbids Rollins consistently on transportation costs.

Frank Burke, the committee's vice chairman, reminded the audience that "the biggest cause of the problem is the lax regulations of the state of New Jersey."

Once an operating permit is issued, he said, "no where does it specify the quantity of wastes which can be accepted."

Burke pointed out that Kin-Buc's expansion plans do not commit the firm to the construction of an incinerator, considered by some to be necessary for the destruction of certain chemicals.

Burke said the committee, through its research and expert consultants, has found serious discrepancies with information provided by Kin-Buc's professionals.

Contrary to the company's interpretation, Burke said there is significant ground water under the Kin-Buc II site, thereby making it geologically unsafe. He argued there is no criteria by which to judge the design of Kin-Buc III and attacked current regulations which don't require specification of what chemicals will be treated.

He said the committee would be sending the state agency a letter based on its technical report which would help them "effectively enforce the conditional approval" granted to Kin-Buc.

Environmental Commission members from Sayreville and Old Bridge were present to lend their support to committee efforts. Mrs. Drwal received overwhelming support for a suggestion to publicly demonstrate in the Meadow Road area of the landfill.

Volunteers were also sought to attend upcoming hearings on Kin-Buc before DEP and the Public Utilities Commission.

The committee's next meeting was set for Oct. 28.

